HUMAN- RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF

WILLIAM FAULKNER

One of the brightest stars in the firmament of American literature, William Cuthbert Faulkner (1897-1962) is an acknowledged literary giant. His four books- *The Sound and The Fury, As I Lay Dying, Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!* are generally considered the most powerful and innovative of twentieth century novels, while several others- *Sanctuary, The Hamlet, Go Down Moses-* are of nearly equal status. Several awards and distinctions were conferred upon him, the most prestigious being the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949 and the National Book Award in 1950. His two novels *The Fable* (1954) and *The Reivers* (1962) won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. As a writer Faulkner’s contribution is remarkable and unparalleled.

In his writings one finds a rare amalgamation of modernistic techniques and traditional values. He deals with issues as old as the life on this earth in a technique that is as modern as the invention of psychoanalytical theory. Faulkner drew extensively upon his family, his extended family and background in a very traditional way for material upon which he employed this technique. His fecundity of imagination, the range of compassion and the reach of his courage as an artist have impressed and awed his admirers and critics alike. His power of invention is great and he has contributed to the theory of the novel as an art form. The sheer bulk of his work is impressive. His publications include approximately fifty poems, ninety short stories, seventeen novels and a three act drama. He is known for an abundance of narrative incidents.

The purpose of the present research work has been to delve deep into various human relationships in the selected novels of William Faulkner. For the purpose of analysis human relationships are divided into two categories. The first category comprises the relationships within the family; it includes the parent child relationship, the sibling relationship and the marital relationship. The second category of relationships consists of the relationships outside the bond of family. This category includes the racial relationship and the obsessive love relationship.
The parent child relationship is a complex cycle of reciprocities, stable and unstable, valuable and destructive. The interaction between parents and children is sometimes negative and sometimes positive. Has Faulkner imparted any importance to the parent child relationship? Do parents in Faulkner always guide their children in the right manner? Do children have to bear the burden of the sins of their parents in Faulkner? Has he dealt with the parent and child relationship in a conventional or unconventional manner? How do sons look at their fathers in Faulkner? Are fathers in Faulkner, a source of inspiration or a cause of distress and agony? Is there any role of mothers in the patriarchal set up of the world of Faulkner? Are mothers in Faulkner as good or bad as the fathers? These are the various issues dealt in the first chapter.

The second chapter deals with another significant relationship within the family; it explores the subtleties and intimacies of sibling relationship. What kind of relationship is shared by children in a family in a Faulkner novel? Are children paying the price of the foolishness or sins of their parents? How has Faulkner viewed this relationship?

The third chapter analyzes the relationship between people wedded together that is the marital relationship. How does Faulkner’s character’s view the oldest institution of the world? Has marriage lost its primal purpose of union of two bodies, minds and souls? What are the various reasons that prompt people to tie nuptial knots in a Faulkner novel? Has Faulkner presented the institution of marriage in a negative light? Has the marital relationship completely crumbled and also become sterile with the growing materialism? How has Faulkner treated love of sexes within the parameters of marriage? What is Faulkner’s take on the age old institution of marriage?

The second category of relationships analyzed is the relationship outside the bond of family. The first relationship in this category is the racial relationship. How do people living is a society get along in a Faulkner novel? How do they view and treat each other? Are they prejudiced and look around with their own narrow bent of mind? In this category the racial relationship and the obsessive love relationship have been analyzed. A question that has been often asked about Faulkner is the probability of a white writer to address the actual questions or traumas of Blacks. Is it possible for a white Southerner to do justice to the never heard but ever present clamours of the Negro in the South? Has Faulkner been able to rise above his
prejudice as a white man? Can the voice of the blacks be ever projected in totality by a white? Are Negroes in his novels real characters of blood and flesh or are they mere shadows? What kind of relationship is shared by these two classes in his novel? How does Southern society deal with people of mixed blood? These are some of the questions which are addressed in the category of racial relationships analyzed in chapter four.

The fifth chapter analyzes the obsessive love relationships outside the bond of family. How has Faulkner treated relationships outside the bond of family? Has he given undue importance to love outside the bond of marriage? What are Faulkner’s views on extra marital or obsessive love relationships? Has he presented these relationships to be more fulfilling than the relationships approved by the society? Has Faulkner been able to deal with love outside the bond of marriage in a subtle and delicate manner? Can life always pass like an illusion or dream?

It has been found that Faulkner seems to be obsessed with the relationship of parent and child for it has dominated his major novels. He has dealt with the relationship of father and son and mother and children exhaustively in his best novels. *Absalom, Absalom!, The Sound and The Fury* (1929) *Sartoris* (1929) and *As I Lay Dying* (1930) are poignant examples of father son relationship as well as mother and children relationship. The father son relationship depicts the theme of rigidity as a personal and social evil. Faulkner asserts the need to rebel against rigidity in order to gain freedom. The father represents the rigid social system and the sons rebel against the prevailing social order. Sons have a quest for a new social order.

Faulkner’s masterpiece *Absalom, Absalom!* is a tragic account of the strained relationship between father and children. The very title of the novel *Absalom, Absalom!* bears testimony to the fact that here Faulkner is dealing with a father son relationship. However, it is ironic that unlike David, the Biblical father of Absalom who has an unflinching affection for his miscreant son, Thomas Sutpen in *Absalom, Absalom!* has no love or concern for his part negro son Charles Bon. He is not ready to accept him as his own flesh and blood as his mother has some taint of Negro blood in her. He rejects him the way any one would have rejected a rotten piece of meat. Sutpen completely shuns Bon and his mother out of his life as something undesirable and unwanted.
Charles Bon, Thomas Sutpen’s deserted son makes it clear repeatedly that he will be satisfied with the least sign of recognition, the barest acknowledgement of human identity. But Sutpen’s design does not allow that. Not only Charles Bon but Sutpen’s acknowledged son Henry Sutpen is also marred by his father’s rigidity for his design. Sutpen uses Henry as a weapon to get rid of Bon. In a way, the towering personality of Thomas Sutpen looms large over his two sons Charles Bon and Henry Sutpen. They are like puppets – they exist only to perform the parts allotted to them: Bon to pursue the recognition he can never get from his father and Henry to commit in deeply affecting and moving circumstances, the inevitable fratricide.

*The Sound and The Fury* presents another instance of destructive effect of father’s nihilism on the sensitive and impressionist mind of his son. Former lawyer Mr. Jason Richmond Compson has been driven to drinking recklessly by unfulfilled ambitions and family squabbles. He has nothing to cling to except his verbal jugglery with which he misleads his introvert son Quentin. Quentin Compson too rebels against his father, however passive his rebellion might appear. His passionate attempt to persuade his father that he has committed incest with Caddy is hopelessly shattered as it comes against the chilling imperturbability of Mr Compson’s worldly wisdom. Mr Compson refuses to take seriously Quentin’s threat of suicide. Quentin is crushed by Caddy’s fall but Mr. Compson fails to see his son’s desperation to save his sister’s honour at any cost. Quentin craves to believe in something that might save his sister and himself from damnation.

Benjy and Jason too revolt against their father but in a different way from their brother Quentin. Benjy’s protest is shown in the howling and moaning that he does at every step. Being an idiot he is unaware about his own existence but he can sense things. He can feel the lack of fatherly love and concern. Jason rebels in an entirely different way from his brothers. For him, denying people their rightful living is his way of deriving pleasure. A man of marred psychology Jason has no love or family in his life. His views about life, love and family are cynical. He has become a sadist owing to the absence of proper guidance from his father and the atmosphere at home. He enjoys burning two free passes to a show in order to torment his young Negro servant. He is left with only one relationship that is his love for money. He can go to any extent to amass money. He can stoop to any level for money.
Bayard too revolts in his own way by repudiating his father’s obsession for violence in *Sartoris*. Although he idealizes his heroic father yet he is mature enough to see his father’s ever increasing lust for power. Like Orestes he is faced with a challenge to avenge his father’s murder and put an end to violence that is gnawing them all.

Anse in *As I Lay Dying* is the meanest father Faulkner has created. He cannot see anything beyond his self interest. Everyone and everything is secondary for him. He always manages to get what he wants by using others. He has no love for his children. Jewel, Cash, Darl, Vardman and Dewey Dell always feel the lack of fatherly love. They know their father too well who always befools people around him with his meekness. He does not mind making his son Jewel lose his favourite horse. His son Cash loses his leg twice during their journey to Jefferson. He does not hesitate to rob his daughter’s petty abortion money by telling her that he has been feeding her for the last fifteen years.

It is in motherhood that Faulkner captures the quality of life that characterizes the whole person – symbolic of the human capacity for caring, for protecting, for treasuring, for loving life. But under the psychic and social pressures and through one’s own inadequacies this relationship has also been marred. The devastating consequences suffered by the offspring of a mother incapable of or even antipathetic to performing her function can be seen in *The Sound and the Fury*. Mrs Caroline Compson fails to give a feeling of security and love to her children. She is always complaining and whining. Her failure to give her children love is the primary cause of the family’s disintegration. She is ashamed of her idiot son Benjy. She is afraid to be seen with him. She changes his name from Maury to Benjy as it is his uncle’s name. She crosses all levels of meanness when the Negro servant Dilsey celebrates Benjy’s birthday which everyone else in the family has forgotten. Dilsey who has brought a cake for Benjy from her meagre savings is scolded by Mrs. Compson. She fails to give her adolescent daughter, Caddy any love or solace which she needs desperately.

Mrs Compson is presented as a one dimensional character of self pity and selfishness. As a mother she is a big failure. She has been unable to reconcile herself to the life she is living. She prepares herself to depart from this world for another better place. She has gone registered to the fact that for the time being she must stay on earth. Mrs Compson’s detachment is symbolised physically by the time she spends locked away in her room while
her moral adequacy is revealed by the strong favouritism she shows to her mean and callous son Jason.

Addie, the enigmatic mother in *As I Lay Dying* is the modern version of Medea. She fails in her role of an affectionate and caring mother miserably. She lacks motherly concern for her children. She considers them manifestation of her husband’s betrayal, so she denies them place in her affection. She not only differentiates among her children but plays a destructive role in their lives. Her illegitimate child Jewel is her favourite. She is ready to do everything for him, but for her children especially Darl and her daughter Dewey Dell she has no affection. Dewey Dell is a lost young girl who misses motherly advice. She is passing through a difficult time of her life as she is pregnant with an unwanted child. But she receives no counsel from her mother. She laments the lack of mother in her life. Darl is an introvert boy who yearns to be recognised as a son by his mother. He hopes that one day his mother will accept him as her own child. But it never happens. Addie has denied him a place in her affection. It is due to her denial in her affection that Darl fails to find a place in the chain of being. He is deprived of lineage. He is unloved and rootless. Addie makes it clear that Jewel, the product of her briefly liberating affair with Whitfield, is the only one of her children for whom she has any affection.

Even after death she haunts her children in the form of her dead body. Her children have to sacrifice their many favourite things in order to get her buried in Jefferson. Jewel has to sell his horse and Cash breaks his leg. The young step mother of Bayard Sartoris, Drusilla in *Sartoris* acts more like a lover than a mother. In her desperation she tries to bring him in her circle of violence and hatred. She is a cause of much trouble and tension for Bayard.

Faulkner has very delicately presented the love between siblings in *The Sound and The Fury, Absalom,Absalom!* and *Sartoris*. Along with parents siblings are a child’s another contact with the world. Since Faulkner wrote about Southern society and its values where family was the centre of every social institution, sibling relationship forms another important aspect of his novels. Faulkner seems to be sensitive in dealing with sibling relationship. His novels are suffused with intimate and intense relationship of siblings. These are the most vital and important ties within the family. The inability of the parents to secure for their children a warm hearth at home motivates the children to form unbreakable bond of love, understanding
and affection amongst them. Siblings succeed where parents fail. These are the vital and life giving ties. Born of the same parents, it is easy for siblings to understand each other and comprehend each other’s actions.

Sibling relationship is subject to great complexities with potential for conflicts and diffusion of sentiments. Faulkner’s novels not only deal with intimate relationship between brothers, and brothers and sisters but also obsessive and negative relationship amongst siblings. In Faulkner’s fictional world sibling relationships range from intimate and very powerful relationship to very negative and life denying ties. Sometimes obsession amongst siblings for each other can be a cause of neurosis and death. The weight of expectations, selfishness of purpose and overindulgence in each other’s affairs are some of the causes that mar this relationship.

The finest and the most delicate presentations of sibling relationship are found in *The Sound and the Fury* and *Absalom, Absalom!* Each book shadows the other in the sense that both have four main narrators who talk about and discuss a crucial but absent character. Both novels are about the founding and ruin of powerful houses. Both novels are about the big named families in their ruins. Both novels discuss in detail the negative impact off ailed parents whose children are lost equally. So intense and desperate is the relationship amongst siblings, that in their love and hatred they rise up to destroy each other and themselves. A subtle relationship between these books can be traced with the parallel themes of incest, a brother’s obsession with his sister’s honour, suicide, fratricide as a means to defend family honour from the threat

It is love that makes the idiot Benjy moan the loss of his sister Caddy in *The Sound and Fury*. It is Quentin’s obsession for his sister Caddy that makes him claim that he has committed incest with her. This way he wants to protect her from the loud, mad world outside. He hopes that through this ultimate sin he might have Caddy to himself. So disillusioned is Quentin by Caddy’s fall and her loveless marriage that he commits suicide. He realizes that life is meaningless without Caddy around her. He is startled to see Caddy’s promiscuity. He is shocked to learn about Caddy’s pregnancy. Unable to face reality, he takes refuge in fantasy. He is scared to face reality. He cannot come to terms with his sister’s sexual awareness or her desire for a male partner.
Jason too loves his sister Caddy and his reason of loving his sister is as strange as that of his other brothers. Caddy has been a means to earn job. But she failed him. So he thinks of her all the time as a cause of his misfortune and marred future. In order to cope with that loss he steals money that Caddy sends for her daughter. His hatred for the world is reflected in the tortures and troubles he hurls at his young niece Quentin. He is a victim of his own whimsical attitude towards life in which money is centre of existence. Since Caddy has been a reason of job loss so he considers her a bitch and her daughter a filthy rut. Jason understands only one language and that is the language of money. Nothing is dear to him except the accumulation of wealth. Jason has tried to reduce every human relationship to its cash value.

Faulkner has presented very vividly the love of siblings in *Absalom, Absalom!*. Henry Sutpen idealizes his half brother Charles Bon. So overpowering is his love for Charles that he is ready to accept Bon as his brother. He does not even bother about his father. He is ready to renounce his patrimony in favour of Bon. Judith too shares same adoration and concern for her brothers in *Absalom, Absalom!* John, too, embraces death for his brother Bayard in *Sartoris*.

Another significant relationship within the parameters of family is the relationship of man and woman married together. Marriage is one of the oldest institutions of society and a significant institution as it legalizes the bond of a man and woman living together. Many writers who have dealt with the intricacies of marital relationship in their novels in an excellent manner are D.H. Lawrence and Henry James. Lawrence has excelled in showing disastrous effects of mismatched marriages and their consequences. *Sons and Lovers*, *The Rainbow* etc are poignant examples of marital relationship. Although marital relationship is not a dominant theme in Faulkner’s novels yet he has dealt with this relationship at length in his major novels *Absalom, Absalom!* *As I Lay Dying*, *Sartoris* and The Snopeses Trilogy.

Faulkner in his novels has presented various shades of married people. Somehow, he seems to have a very low opinion of people wedded together. His novels are suffused with examples of loveless marriages and marred marital relationships and their consequences. Hardly in his novels does one find consummate and fulfilling relationship of married people. Love has rarely been a cause of marriage in a Faulkner novel. It is through various arrangements for convenience that marriages in his novels take place. In a Faulkner novel, the
bond of marriage is not the result of unbridled love or gushing affection; rather it is the result of pre-planned motive or acceptance of unavoidable circumstances. Moreover, neither of the partners is ready to accept the other as he or she is. Both the partners try to impose upon each other their own set of beliefs that result in the complete failure of relationship. Faulkner many times, seems to be making fun of people married for calculated reasons.

Eula Varner, the divinely beautiful girl is hushed into marriage with an impotent imposter to cover her pregnancy in The Snopes Trilogy. Theirs is probably the case of worst mismatched marriage in Faulkner. An astoundingly beautiful and desirable girl Eula Varner is an incarnation of nature in its most beautiful form. She is compared to Earth Goddess and is worshipped wherever she goes. Everyone is left awed by her divine beauty and overpowering sexuality. There is hardly anyone who is not bewitched by her charm.

The divinely beautiful Eula is sold to Flem who has only one craving in life and that is to get rich by hook or crook. Flem readily accepts her as his wife due the monetary benefits. He has no concern for her or anyone else in his life. He can never appreciate her beauty or bed his wife whom every boy in Frenchman’s Bend has dreamed of. He does not mind her being pregnant before marriage or having an affair after marriage. He is not interested in her. For him she is a means to get rich. Later he does not hesitate to exploit her affair to extract more from Eula. Even her suicide is seen as an opportunity to draw something more from her family. Because of Flem’s impotence and the lovelessness of their relationship, their relationship is sterile, a symbolic Land of the Dead.

Addie’s contempt for her husband Anse is too great for her in As I Lay Dying. So overwhelming is her hatred for Anse that even his children are worth hating. Dewey Dell, Vardman and Darl who are only Anse’s children have no place in her scheme of things. Addie married Anse to get rid of the boredom of her life. But he fails to understand her and respond to her fiercely intense personality. Frustrated Addie exacts a promise from Anse, to be buried in Jefferson. This in reality is her revenge from her husband who has been incapable of responding to her real being, her reality during her life. So she decides to punish him after death. Anse too promises her to fulfil her last wish to be buried among her own people in Jefferson. In fact it is not out of his love for Addie or respect for her emotions. It is due to his hidden motive to get himself new teeth and wife that he accepts her last wish. Among all the characters of the novel related to Addie directly or indirectly, he is least
affected by her death. Addie’s death is a healthy liberation for him. He is one dimensional caricature of selfishness, ineptitude and self pity. His love for his departed wife is shown in the way he dresses at the night of Addie’s burial and puts perfume. Through the effort and sacrifice of his children he buries his first wife and at the time of burial he is ready with another. He is a soulless person and in a way he outshines Addie’s desire to revenge and punish him by providing him a new wife.

The commanding personality of Thomas Sutpen blots out any consideration of love in *Absalom, Absalom!* Sutpen rejects his first wife because she has a taint of Negro blood in her. He marries for the second time as he wants a male heir to continue his name. Now he needs respectability the most so he selects wife from a respectable family. Ellen Coldfield suits him best for this purpose. Undoubtedly, Sutpen has no interest in her. Once she begets him a male heir, she becomes a non entity for him. She is as good as a dead woman in the Sutpen house. Unfortunately, Ellen becomes a pale reflection of her dominating husband.

The Negro white relationship is an important aspect of Faulkner’s fiction. In Faulkner’s fiction beneath its worried surface of attitude and ideas there is also a remarkable steadiness of feeling towards the Negro. *Go Down Moses* (1942), *Intruder in the Dust* (1948) and *Light in August* (1932) are Faulkner’s finest delineations on racial relationships. His opinions change, his early racial complacency evaporates, and his sympathy visibly enlarges. The boy Isaac in *Go Down Moses* unconsciously and then with considered asset claims as his spiritual parent the old Negro, Sam Fathers. The real strength of *Go Down Moses* lies not only in the stories of the hunt, important and impressive though these are, but in the powerful treatment of tragic relationship between white man and negro at various periods of South’s history. What Ike learns from his experience with the old Ben is something that is universal; it has to do with a perennial problem and with a problem more not less these days of man’s quest for nature. But when man loses his awe of Nature through a purely efficient utilization of it, or when he ceases to love it in terms of some sort of code, he not only risks destroying nature but risks bestializing his own Nature.

A notable change is also noted in the depiction of the blacks. They may still be the obverse reflection of the whites they live among but they are at least recognised entities who cannot be easily known. Their reality must be grasped with effort. They are seen as human
beings though still anchored within the limitations of the culture of their time. There is, however, recognition of their pain and anguish as victims. There is growing awareness of their hardships and traumas they have endured due to racism.

If *Go Down Moses* is a serious scrutiny of the shame and pathos of white and black relationship, *Intruder in the Dust* is an exciting account of the relationship between Young Charles Mallison and Lucas Beauchamp- a white boy and Negro. The boy learns, though with great difficulty to accept the Negro as a human being. The emphasis as revealed in Lucas is upon the autonomy of the blacks and the integrity of their personhood and upon the recognition and rejection by the blacks of the demeaning aspects of their status in society.

Joe Christmas, the doomed man in *Light in August* is engaged in a desperate, violent and life long search for a place in society and as a sense of his own identity. He is perpetually made aware of society’s inflexible requirement that a man can either be a white or Negro and act accordingly. Even at the age of five in the orphanage he is made to feel that he is different from others but he is never able to gauge that difference. After he is rejected by the white world he lives in Detroit and leads a primitive black life. He lives as a man and wife with a woman who resembles an ebony carving. In his own way he tries to get rid of all the elements of whiteness from him but he fails again. He has not gained a place in the white world but he has been unfit for the black world also.

He can never be accepted as a human being. Christmas is the tragic helpless victim of naturalistic fiction, destroyed by forces beyond his control. His conflict is an analogue to the bleak, despairing, destructive racial battle that rends apart Southern society at large. Self hatred, guilt, obsession with racial purity in the face of its perennial threat, debasement of relationship between the individuals and inability to utilize life’s potential are its internalized features. Faulkner demonstrates how the loss of the sanctity of life leads to a sense of corruption of life at its source.

Many critics are of the opinion that Joe is a villain who murders Joanna, as in the very beginning of the novel he is being searched for the murder of Joanna, a recluse of New England abolitionist ancestry. Critics like Malcolm Cowley, one of Faulkner’s best readers, link Joe Christmas with Popeye, the grotesque and the filthy villain of *Sanctuary*. But Joe is
a victim of society’s rigidity that pushes him to the corner. Joe becomes what he ought to have become, not by any biological inheritance, but by the way in which society regards him, and the way in which he is constrained to regard himself. The Jefferson society has its classifications in terms of race and colour. Every individual is labelled in and treated in these terms. Surprisingly, these categories which are created by man become creators of man in their social identification. Unfortunately what starts as a category becomes a myth. The word Negro is certainly a myth in Jefferson society. That is why people like Joe who cannot fit in any category are either sacrificed or driven out of society whose cherished beliefs they threaten. His triumph lies in the fact that in spite of everything that is done to him and that he does to the world, he remains in part dedicated to life.

One finds in Faulkner a progression from Southern stereotype to personal vision, interrupted by retreats to inherited phobias and to an ideology that is morally inadequate to the vision. Faulkner has tried to do justice to individuals of every class and individuals of every type in his works. Whether they are Negroes or whites, Southerner or Northerner, old settlers or new exploiters every character is expressing the outrage and fury before the terrible violence and injustice that foil the man’s perfect living state. It was through his peculiar style and his elaborate methods of deliberately withholding the meaning that Faulkner found in art an adequate mistress to his terrible, complex and inexhaustible vision of outraged and baffled man- man who knows that his efforts to find perfect life must fail and his efforts to understand both his world and his failure must forever remain imperfect.

Another relationship outside the bond of family is the obsessive love relationship. Love is one of the most powerful emotions of the world. The power of love makes people do things which they can never do otherwise. Sometimes love becomes an obsession with some people and they are ready to cross every boundary of man-made society and its rules. Faulkner is obviously not known for love stories yet some of his novels have presented excellent love stories which are delicate and sublime at the same time. The star of obsessed lovers shines many a time in Faulknerian canon. Faulkner has presented various shades of love between man and woman outside the bonds created by society. Sometimes the bond of love between two people is purely carnal and sometimes it is entirely platonic. Sometimes obsessive lovers lose themselves in love and cause great loss to the people they love. Love becomes an obsession when the lovers fail to see anything beyond the fulfilment of their love.
Then it ceases to bring happiness and it causes unhappiness and neurosis. In such a situation lovers cease to bring out positive aspects of each other: they become incremental in each other's doom. Faulkner has rarely created positive love relationship outside the bond created by society in man woman relationship. Most of his characters in love cause much trouble and tension to themselves and people around.

His novels *The Wild Palms* (1939), *The Hamlet*, *The Town*, *The Mansion*, and *Light in August* deal with obsessive love relationships. Faulkner conceived of love in terms of pity and compassion, sacrifice and faith, patience and endurance. Seldom in Faulkner’s works has one found a mature recognition of fulfilled love between man and woman. The writer does not identify love with romantic courtship and illicit sexual activity. The fate of any man or woman who ignores love to pursue selfish ends is doomed. Harry stumbles at the operation that causes Charlotte’s death in *The Wild Palms*. Everything about their romantic relationship is anti nature. They break the rules of Nature and are ultimately destroyed by Nature.

Her desire not to have additional children is the outward sign of something lacking in her mental makeup. She seems to be lacking in the capacity of life. However, Harry allows life to live through it. With their passion for each other along with their follies they are a perfectly plausible pair, and their love story is one of the most poignant and bitter in modern literature.

Eula’s endless lovers lust over her in *The Snopes Trilogy*. But no one can impress her enough to be with her or to love her. She is completely unaffected by the luscious glances or comments of the people around. One of her first lovers, Labove is bewildered by her appearance and appeal. He wants to possess her once. Like a mad man he lusts for her. His abortive attempt to molest her destroys him as for Eula it is not even worth mentioning. He runs away from the school. He is shocked and appalled by Eula’s apathy. Gavin Stevens is Eula’s another admirer. He loves her truly and is ready to do anything for her. His devotion is the devotion of devout. Like Labove, he is also shocked in his failure to have Eula. But his failure does not stop him from loving her or trying to protect her. In a way he is the only lover of Eula who actually loves her. He tries to save her from the onslaughts of Snopism but fails. His love is victorious in the sense that he is able to save Eula’s daughter from Snopism.
Like a true lover he gets nothing but defeat as all his endeavours fail to save Eula from committing suicide yet he is victorious in the sense that lovers are never losers.

*Light in August* presents strange amalgamation of two pairs of lovers and the entirely different outcomes of their love. One pair of lovers brings life and the other inflicts heart rending death on each other. Joe’s desperate and violent search for peace ends in his tragic death whereas Lena’s entry in Jefferson and in life of Byron brings life literally and metaphorically.

To a certain extent Byron Bunch in *Light in August* is also an idealistic type of lover. He is ready to leave and sacrifice everything for Lena Grove who represents all those light and life bringing virtues of womanhood that Faulkner was fascinated with.

She is simple and lives for the present moment only. Her life is guided by the moment she is in. She is allied with everything that is permanent and enduring. She is associated with everything that is simple and natural. She is unperturbed by the bizarre world. She sweeps Byron of his feet.

He simply wants to be her guide and guardian whereas the other lovers in *Light in August*, Joe and Joanna strip each other of humanity in their search for love. Joanna gradually becomes a symbol of everything that Joe has been running away from. She tries to impose upon him, her system of belief. She wants to put his life in order according to her set of beliefs. Joe is too twisted a personality to be manipulated. Throughout his life he has been running away from himself. He is unable to reconcile to his own identity. Joanna’s so called love releases all the negative energy that he has accumulated since childhood. She combines in herself dwarfed sexuality and the rigidity of belief. Their relationship ends in disaster and death for both of them.

Far from idealizing the old South, Faulkner sees in it an instance of the paralyzing influence that a rigid caste system and a closed society can exert on the individual. Born in such a society, men are automatically labelled and cross filled in terms of colour, class and clan. The individual, thus, is born into an imposing system of myths and rituals, all of which
exert their coercive pressure on him. Probably that is why Faulkner places human relationships on a very high pedestal

It is evident that Faulkner has shown the disastrous effects of loveless ties within the family. His novels explore in depth the root cause of all dissatisfaction, unhappiness and neurosis. Faulkner has stressed the need of unbridled and unconditional love amongst people of a family and an extraordinary sense of compassion and tolerance in people living in community with different races and classes. The lack of love within a family is one of the major causes of disintegration of society. In a society when everything around is crumbling, there is loss of faith and lack of concern; only fine human relationships whether they are amongst the family members or amongst the members of community or society ,can pave a way for happy and harmonious living. It is evident that Faulkner places human relationships on a very high pedestal and his novels lament the loss of congenial family and social relationships.

Although Faulkner has no formal knowledge of psychoanalytic theory yet his understanding of the depth of human heart, mind and soul is immense and it is clearly evident in his novels. In Faulkner’s fiction one sees among other things, the contrast between the old and the new, and the pressure created upon various individuals by crumbling of the past and the shift from the past to the present. In his novels one finds how the institutionalisation of rigid social and religious codes have abolished natural human relations and created antagonistic responses among men. He presents picture of modern man who is stripped of all enduring values and is lost. Man has lost his primitive sense of belongingness to a creative natural order, because he views existence as a chaos rather than custom.

His works sometimes give the feel of a tragedy in an old and understandable sense of the word. But his vision is conditioned by his humanity, by his indomitable, comic and sorrowful quest towards the values necessary for survival. Many critics claim that Faulkner’s view of life is the most pessimistic ever voiced in fiction and his writings are predominantly of melancholic tone. But Faulkner’s deep pessimism does not proceed from a denial of values but from a melancholic recognition of great opposition of evil to the true values of life. His final vision is hope: man sinful but striving for the good, man shackled up by bonds within and without him but appearing to be free.